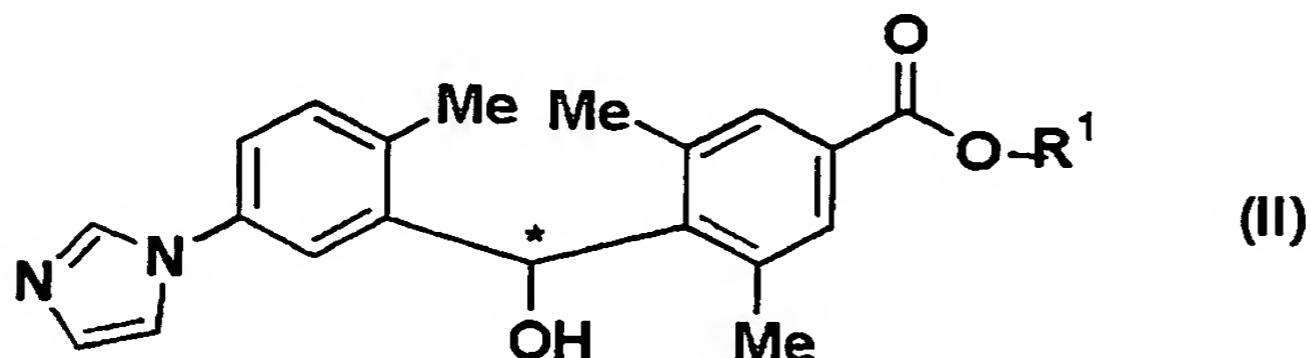
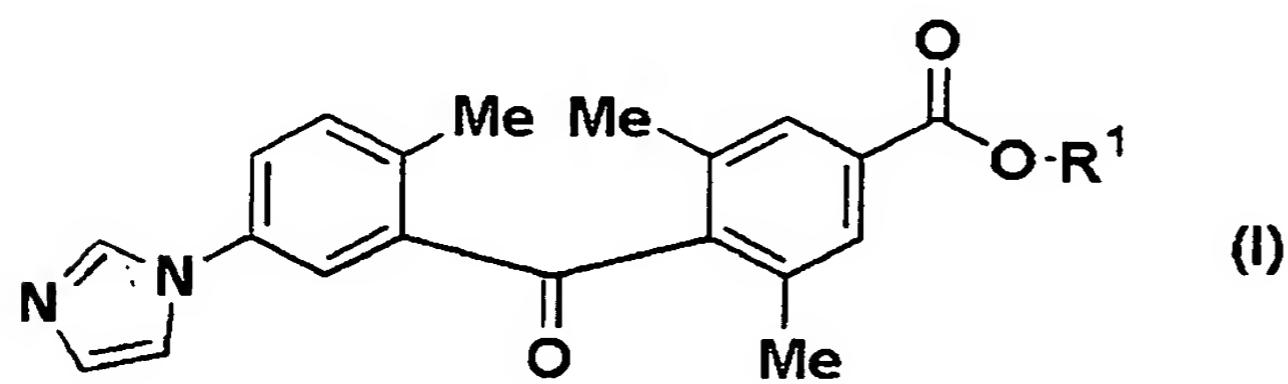


Claims

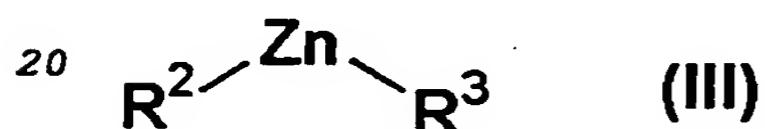
1. A method of preparing optically active 4-[hydroxy[5-(imidazol-1-yl)-2-methylphenyl]methyl]-3,5-dimethylbenzoic acid represented by the following formula (II)



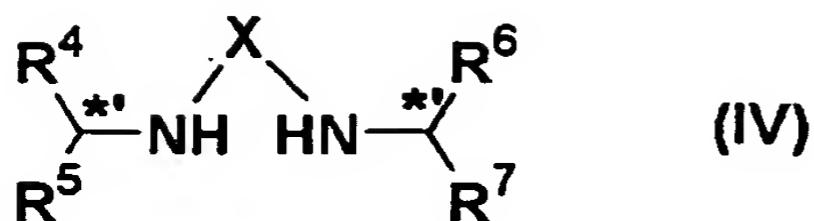
wherein COOR¹ is a carboxylic acid or a carboxylate and the
10 carbon atom with * is an asymmetric carbon atom, or an ester
thereof, from 4-[5-(imidazol-1-yl)-2-methylbenzoyl]-3,5-
dimethylbenzoic acid represented by the following formula (I)



15 wherein COOR¹ is as defined above, or an ester thereof, which
comprises reacting the compound represented by the formula (I)
with a silane agent in the presence of a zinc compound
represented by the following formula (III)



20 wherein R² and R³ are each independently a lower alkyl group or
a lower alkoxy group, or R² and R³ in combination show an
alkylenedioxy group optionally having substituent(s), and an
optically active diamine compound represented by the following
25 formula (IV)



wherein R^4 and R^6 are each independently a lower alkyl group, R^5 is an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), R^7 is an aryl group optionally having substituent(s) or a lower alkyl group, X is an alkylene group or a cycloalkylene group, and one or both of the two carbon atoms with '*' is(are) asymmetric carbon atom(s).

10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein R^1 is an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), a cycloalkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aralkyl group optionally having substituent(s) on the ring and/or the chain.

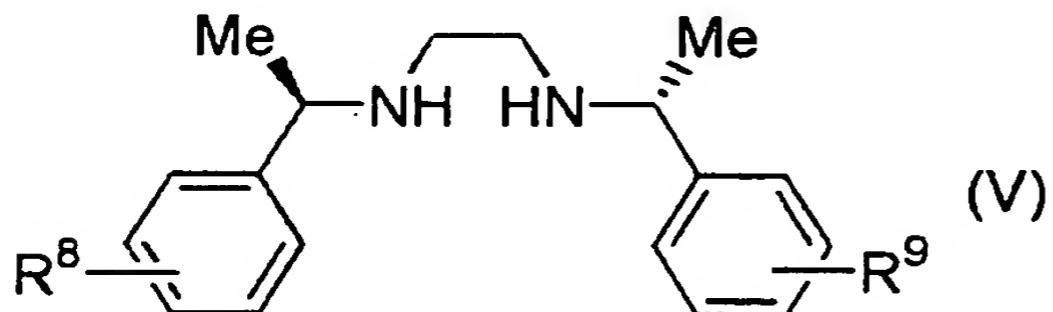
15 3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein R^2 and R^3 are each independently a lower alkyl group.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of alcohol or glycol.

20

5. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the optically active diamine compound is a N,N' -bis-(1-phenylethyl)ethane-1,2-diamine compound represented by the following formula (V)

25



wherein R^8 and R^9 are each independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl group, a lower alkoxy group, a nitro group, a cyano group or an aryl group optionally having

substituent(s),
or an optical isomer thereof.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the N,N'-bis-(1-
5 phenylethyl)ethane-1,2-diamine compound is (R,R)-N,N'-bis-(1-
phenylethyl)ethane-1,2-diamine or (R,R)-N,N'-bis-[1-(4-
bromophenyl)ethyl]ethane-1,2-diamine.

7. The method of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the silane
10 agent is selected from the group consisting of
trimethylsilane, diethylsilane, triethylsilane, phenylsilane,
diphenylsilane, methylphenylsilane, dimethylphenylsilane,
diethylphenylsilane, methyldiphenylsilane, tert-
butyldimethylsilane, tert-butyldiphenylsilane,
15 trimethoxysilane, diethoxysilane, triethoxysilane,
tributoxysilane, triphenoxy silane,
(trimethylsiloxy)dimethylsilane,
bis(trimethylsiloxy)methylsilane, triisopropoxysilane,
tris(trimethylsiloxy)silane, tris(trimethylsilyl)silane and
20 polymethylhydrosiloxane.

8. A method of preparing an optically active 4-[hydroxy[5-
(imidazol-1-yl)-2-methylphenyl]methyl]-3,5-dimethylbenzoic
acid ester which comprises reacting 4-[5-(imidazol-1-yl)-2-
25 methylbenzoyl]-3,5-dimethylbenzoic acid ester with
polymethylhydrosiloxane in the presence of zinc di-lower alkyl
and an optically active diamine compound represented by the
formula (V).

30 9. The method of claim 8 further comprising a reaction in the
presence of alcohol or glycol.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising a reaction in the
presence of ether.